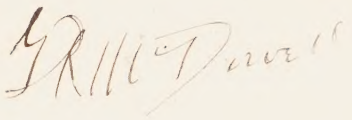
How To Sell QUALITY



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HOW TO SELL

QUALITY

A Resume of Methods Successfully used by Prominent Salesmen to Meet Price Competition; Hold Customers for the Future and to Cement Good-Will

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BY J. C. ASPLEY

Editor "Sales Management Magazine"; Author "Field Tactics for Salesmen"; "What a Salesman Should Know about Credits" and other Books for Salesmen

POCKET EDITION

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THIS is the fifth of a series of pocket "how" books brought out by The Dartnell Corporation to help salesmen grow. It is published to meet an era of price competition, keener and fiercer than any price competition yet experienced by this generation.

This competition into which we are headed is going to test the mettle of every man who sells goods. Those who do not understand the power of quality over price must fail in the test. Price salesmanship cannot possibly succeed.

On the other hand a salesman who understands how to sell quality, who has the courage to refuse to allow goods made to sell on quality to be compared with goods made to sell on price, will come out with flying colors, a made man.

It is to help you to meet these conditions that members of the Dartnell Editorial Staff have interviewed salesmen in all lines of business. Many of these men are now holding executive positions because of their ability to successfully sell quality in the face of price competition of the keenest kind. From the hundreds of plans gathered we have selected those which will prove most helpful to you, and to other salesmen in different lines of business.

Not all of these plans will be new to you. In fact, most of them are plans which in prewar

days were common property. Some of them you have already read of in sales bulletins. But during the recent seller's market most of us have grown soft. It was so easy to get business that we have forgotten many of the little strategems which stood us in such good stead in 1914. So we have risked the verdict of "old stuff" in the hope that the resurrection of these forgotten plans may help you to greater winnings.

If this book reaches your hands prior to the spring of 1922 much of the message it brings will seem of remote usefulness. But read it anyway. Store the ideas away in the back of your head against the day which is surely coming when you will be called upon to use them. Any salesman who will take the methods advocated in this book and, after reshaping them to fit his peculiar problems, apply them in his selling work will be a better salesman and a bigger business producer than he possibly could if he limits himself to his own experience.

Comment on First Edition

"I was absolutely sold on HOW TO SELL QUALITY after reading the first four chapters. Since then I have read three more. I feel it is one of the best pieces of 'sales help' work that you have ever gotten out. I want every branch manager and salesman in our organization to have a copy of this manual."—J. B. Wright, Director of Sales, Earl & Wilson.

"We believe you have done a real service in getting up such a book as HOW TO SELL QUALITY. This comes as near fitting our case as any book could possibly do without being gotten up especially for our purpose—it certainly hits the nail on the head and we are glad to place our order with you for three dozen."—C. B. Robinson, The J. B. Ford Company.

"The arguments and examples which you bring out in this book should help a lot in building up that very necessary quality morale which should be existent in a good sales force."—The Whitaker Paper Company.

"I am pleased to state that HOW TO SELL QUALITY is certainly a splendid, well-written booklet. It is right to the point and undoubtedly should put pep in any salesman reading it."—F. C. Dilberger, California Notion & Toy Company.

"We are today instructing our purchasing department to send you an order for two dozen HOW TO SELL QUALITY, and we trust you can get these to us at once. We are now mapping out our next year's campagin and it

would be most appropriate to get these in the hands of our salesmen immediately."—General Asbestos & Rubber Co.

"Please send us four dozen copies of HOW TO SELL QUALITY. I must say that this is one of the best sales manuals that has ever come to my attention, and so well fits into the policy of our business that I want to put a copy in the hands of everyone in our sales department."—E. L. Cline, Sales Manager, Taggart Baking Co.

"HOW TO SELL QUALITY certainly carries some exceptionally good ideas and is one that every salesman should not only read but study carefully. We would appreciate your sending us one dozen copies."—H. W. Dutton, Sales Manager, Skinner Mfg. Company.

"We are very much interested in HOW TO SELL QUALITY and it is our intention to place a copy in the hands of each of our salesmen. Please send us thirty copies."—J. F. Wigginton, General Manager, Louisiana Red Cypress Company.

"It is a pleasure to write you with regard to this manual, for, in the writer's judgment, it fills a very distinctive purpose, and cannot fail to be of value to those who are sincerely interested in better salesmanship and better business."—W. B. Sullivan, Mgr., Rich Tool Company.

An Appreciation

On behalf of those salesmen who may find this little book helpful, the author wants to thank the following sales executives who have given generously of their experience in marketing quality merchandise so that this manual might be of practical help to those who sell.

J. E. Kelley, general sales manager, Simonds Mfg. Co.
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C. W. Treadwell, manager sales instruction, Burroughs Adding Machine Co.
H. N. Otis, secretary, Tubular Woven Fabric Company
H. E. Peterson, general sales manager, Beaver Board Co.
E. G. Anderson, president, American Bronze Corporation
H. A. Porter, sales manager, Harris Automatic Press Co.
Champe S. Andrews, vice-president, O. B. Andrews Co.
R. H. McGredy, secretary and sales manager, Shepard Electric Crane & Hoist Co.
C. A. Burnham, secretary, Northrup, King & Co.
J. M. Sparrow, president, Imperial Varnish & Color Co.
Charles H. Hathway, president, Badger Mfg. Corporation
H. B. Nickerson, secretary, American Steam Gauge & Valve Mfg. Co.
W. W. Dodge, manager, National Veneer Products Co.
R. A. Barnes, general sales manager, Bankers Supply Co.
C. J. Fleur, sales manager, The Larrowe Milling Co.
Edward T. Hall, secretary, Ralston Purina Company
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Ralph N. Mitchell, sales manager, Waggener Paint Co.

H. J. Winsten, sales manager, H. Black Co.
B. W. Thayer, vice-president, Minneapolis Knitting Works
H. H. Hobart, manager service bureau, The Curtis Companies
H. R. Henderson, president, The Absorene Manufacturing Co.
E. T. Gray, western sales manager, Devoe & Raynolds Company.
Paul R. Clark, president, Fireproof Products Co.
G. S. Rosborough, sales manager, The Measuregraph Co.
John K. Broderick, president, Broderick & Bascom Rope Company
R. E. Nuese, secretary, Francis H. Leggett Company
Duncan Keith, vice-president, Burgess Battery Company
H. W. Dutton, sales manager, Skinner Manufacturing Co.
O. A. Dole, sales manager, Evinrude Motor Co.
M. E. Ledlie, sales manager, The Detroit Vapor Stove Co.
C. E. Butcher, sales manager, The National Roofing Co.
William Maxwell, vice-president, Thomas A. Edison, Inc.
Dr. A. Holmes, president, Drake University.
G. D. Colburn, general manager, Dilver Mfg. Co.
Saunders Norvell, chairman, McKesson & Robbins, Inc.
A. A. Breed, president, Crane & Breed Manufacturing Co.
K. D. Umrath, sales manager, Hussman Refrigerator Co.
Harry P. Hotz, sales manager, Schlitz Beverage Company
E. D. Voorhis, sales manager, H. D. Lee Company
Paul Jones, sales manager, True Shape Hosiery Co.
J. W. Wiley, secretary, Vitrolite Company

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PRICE is the poorest argument that can be used in selling, because an article sold at a price usually has no other argument in its favor.

A QUALITY article has everything in its favor including the price asked for it.

H. W. Dutton

I—What Quality Means to a Salesman

SOME years ago H. J. Heinz was implored by his salesmen to put out a ten cent can of tomatoes.

At that time the Heinz product was a twelve cent seller, and his salesmen thought that if they had a cheaper brand it would be a simple matter for them to meet the lower priced competition.

But Mr. Heinz would have none of it. "Don't you know," he said, "that the reason this business has been successful is because we don't have a ten cent can to sell. We don't want to put ourselves in the 'ten cent' class. *Sell quality and the price won't matter.*"

There are salesmen today who have the same notion about the price question as the Heinz salesmen then had. They are convinced that the reason they cannot get more business is because their price is too high. If the house would only cut the prices a little they know they could get a lot more business. But could they?

The Steinway piano sells for nearly three times the price of a piano made by a competitor who claims that his piano is just as good as a Stein-

way. Yet last year Steinway salesmen sold twenty-five pianos for every instrument sold by the price competitor.

A Price Raise that Increased Sales

You can get a seven-passenger automobile as low as $750, one-fifth of the price you would have to pay for a seven-passenger Cadillac. Yet over 22,000 Cadillac cars were sold last year to people who willingly paid five times as much to get Cadillac quality. When all other automobile manufacturers were reducing prices in 1914, Cadillac deliberately raised its price. The salesmen were positive that sales would suffer. But on the contrary they increased even faster than they did with the lower prices. A recent analysis of the cars registered in the city of Detroit shows the Cadillac as third on the list, with more cars than all the so-called popular priced cars with two exceptions.

If you are willing to walk up a flight of stairs you can buy a suit of clothes that looks like wool for $17. Sears, Roebuck & Company list garments for even less in their big 1921 catalogue. As compared with these cheap garments Hart, Schaffner & Marx clothes sell for two to three times as much. But the public knows them as

being all wool. Consequently Hart, Schaffner & Marx, selling a suit at twice the price of its competitors', does almost as much business as all its price-cutting competitors put together.

Only a Quality Business Can Endure

During the ten years that the Evinrude motor has been on the market over fifty competitive motors have been brought out to sell at a lower price. Nearly all of these cheaper motors have fallen by the wayside and there are now more than 150,000 Evinrudes in use.

A survey of sales of members of the American Association of Wholesale Opticians shows that the companies who do the bulk of the business are not those who have the lowest prices, but those who put out the highest quality merchandise and charge prices commensurate with quality.

Take your own line. How many concerns are there who undersell you in price? These competitors go about the country saying that their product is "just as good" as yours. They advance all kinds of imaginary reasons why they can undersell you. They share the advertising "saving," operate a profit sharing plant, control their own sources of raw materials, or offer some equally

plausible excuse for their lower prices. Naturally they make an occasional sale—you can sell some people anything once—but the fact remains that the combined sales of these price pirates is but a fraction of the business done by the quality houses. Moreover, the quality house will be in business and prospering when the man who stakes his future on price alone will have long since been forgotten.

Cheap Prices Give the Lie to Quality Talk

These quality concerns are able to pile up these sales records, not because of their price, *but in spite of it.* The price of a Steinway piano is its badge of quality. Even though there may be other pianos "just as good," the man who buys a Steinway gets its extra cost back every time he looks at it in his drawing room.

"I am quite aware that I am paying more for a Knox hat," says Justice Brandeis of the United States Supreme Court, "but the feeling that I am wearing a Knox hat is worth the difference."

Cheap things are made for people who cannot pay more; for people who must get along the best they can with something almost as good. Such goods are built down to a price, rather than up to

a standard. Lacking quality, sooner or later they will cause dissatisfaction. The buyer forgets that when he made his purchase he compromised with something cheap. He expects the same service from his $150 stenciled piano as he would from a Steinway. When the expected service is not forthcoming he is aggravated and put out. Forever after he is "down" on the man who sold him.

The Price Is Soon Forgotten

Contrawise, the man who buys a quality product soon forgets that he paid more for it, and remembers only the satisfaction it gives him. Just as the man who buys the substitute regrets it ever afterward, so the man who buys a quality article will be a life long booster for the man who sold it to him. Quality is the strongest backing you have.

Quality means repeat orders. It means trade that stays with you year in and year out. It means that you will be able to hold what you have and add to it. In short, it means enduring success, and not success built upon the quick sands of here-today-and-gone-tomorrow customers.

A certain salesman for many years represented one of the large St. Louis coffee houses in a southwestern territory. The line was one that sold on a quality basis and was generally recognized by

the trade as being a business builder. During the ten years that this salesman had been with this house he built up a good trade and had a great deal of secret satisfaction in knowing his relationship with most of his customers was so intimate that they would buy anything he told them to buy.

One Salesman's Tragic Mistake

Two years ago an eastern house, learning of the big business that this salesman was taking from this territory, made him a proposition. It was a very attractive proposition. In fact it was so attractive that on the basis of what the salesman sold in 1919 he would make from two to three times as much money with the eastern house. So he decided to make the change.

Being a good salesman and well liked by his trade, it was not difficult for him to get many of his old customers to try the new line. Aside from his personal acquaintance with the trade, the new line allowed a larger margin of profit to the dealer, if the dealer wished to take it, and you know how the dealers love to hear the jingle of the extra profit in their cash registers. Consequently, the first three months the salesman had the new line he did a land-office business. He

wondered how he had ever been such a fool as to work for his old employer at such a piker salary.

But our friend was soon to learn one of the great lessons of business. The next trip over his territory found the trade, which once welcomed him with open arms, chilly and distant. The dealers had forgotten all about the extra profit that they made on his coffee, and complained bitterly that it did not repeat. The housewife who bought it once, went elsewhere for her next coffee. And the reputation for having high quality coffee which the merchant had built up among the housewives of his town was soon dissipated.

When Customers Don't Come Back

So the second trip was the last trip that this salesman ever made over a territory in which he had spent the best ten years of his life. Today he is selling insurance on the Pacific coast. He may be making more money than he did selling coffee, that I do not know, but I do know that his failure as a coffee salesman began and ended the day he forsook quality for price.

There is still another objection to a price business, which though less immediate in its affect on a salesman's success is quite as important. I

refer to the demoralizing effect on the business as a whole, and particularly its deteriorating effect on the organization behind the sales force. If your house should follow the plan of meeting every price cut as it comes along it would not be long before there would be no figure for your customer to use as a basis of price comparison. In other words selling would simmer down into a seesaw proposition. You have the lowest price today, and your competitor has it tomorrow. The cutting and recutting would continue until a point was reached where the normal profit required to operate a business had been absorbed. What would be the next step? Either one of two things, go out of business or take the profit out of selling or operating costs. In either case you would suffer.

Price Cutting a Fool's Pastime

That is why business men of big vision refuse to become a party to any price-cutting contest. They know that at best it would be but a temporary advantage, held only until competitors had time to pull themselves together for a still deeper cut. And they know, too, that permanent success can only be built on a quality foundation. A cut in price—if out of line with the general market trend—will undo a reputation for quality quicker than any other one thing. It breeds suspicion.

Buyers think: "If his stuff were as good as he says it is he wouldn't have to cut the price." And it is logical.

So the next time you feel tempted to complain about the slowness of your house to meet a competitor's price remember that there is another side to the situation other than the one you see. Perhaps we are a good deal like the little boy who wanted the candy.

Quality Makes Salesmen Possible

It is not difficult to understand why quality is such a great force for success in sales work. *Were it not for quality there would be no salesmen,* as we understand the word in its modern sense. If every brand of shoes were made to the same specifications, all that a manufacturer would have to do would be to send out a price list. If his prices were lower than those of his competitors then he would get the business. It would be a simple matter. But the moment one manufacturer decides that by using a better grade of leather his shoes will give greater satisfaction and he must charge more for them, then he must use salesmen to explain to the dealers how the higher priced shoes will wear longer and make satisfied customers

for him. If the salesman's explanation is convincing then the dealer will pay the extra price to get the better leather in the hopes that his customers in turn will be better satisfied.

What a Salesman Owes to His House

So you see that quality is synonimous with satisfied customers, and we all know that the product which gives the most satisfaction *in the long run,* is the easiest to sell. This thought was ably expressed in a saying often credited to Emerson that the world will build a path to the door of the man who can write a better book, preach a better sermon or build a better mouse trap, even though he make his home in the woods. As a salesman you want to tie up to the house which puts the kind of quality into its products that will cause people to recognize them as being the standard by which all competitive products are judged.

Never lose sight of that oft forgotten truth that a salesman's success is six-tenths himself and four-tenths his line. If you sell a thing that is better than your competitor is selling you may be sure that the world will find it out and want it. When people start wanting the thing you are selling the measure of your success depends only on your ability to fill positions of greater importance.

II—The Basis of All Quality Sales

TWO farm wagons stood in a public market. Both were loaded with potatoes in bags. A woman stopped before the first wagon.

"How much are potatoes today?" she asked the farmer.

"Two fifty a bag," said the farmer.

"Oh, my," exclaimed the woman, "that is pretty high isn't it? I only paid two dollars for the last."

" 'Taters' has gone up" was the only information the grower would give, and that indifferently, with a shrug of his shoulders.

The woman went on to the second wagon and asked the same question. But the second farmer's manner was in marked contrast. Instead of replying indifferently to her question, he said:

"These are the best potatoes in the market, madam. In the first place I raise the kind with small eyes, so there will be no waste in peeling; potatoes are too high now to peel away. Then I sort them by sizes. In each bag you will find a large size for boiling and cutting up, and a medium size for baking. The baking size cooks quickly, all done at the same time and so saves

coal or gas, whichever you use. We wash all our potatoes clean at home, too. You could put one of these bags in your parlor and not soil the carpet —and you are not paying for a lot of dirt. I'm getting $3.00 a bag for them."

He sold her two bags at three dollars a bag, in spite of the fact that she could have bought potatoes at the next wagon for fifty cents a bag less. The second farmer knew the principles of selling quality, the first farmer did not. Yet if you were to ask the second farmer why his customer so willingly paid him more, he would probably tell you because his potatoes were worth more.

How to Paint a Quality Picture

Whether they really were better, or whether he only thought they were better, is hard to say. In any event the first farmer could have claimed pretty nearly everything for his potatoes that the second farmer did. The point we want to make is that the woman who bought the potatoes was moved by certain definite forces of human nature, and these same forces are to be found in every quality sale. Therefore it will pay you well, before proceeding to analyze the methods used by successful quality salesmen, to consider for a moment what these forces or principles are.

As every man who has ever sold goods knows, there are two avenues of appeal that may be utilized in making a sale. One of these is to appeal to a man's *feeling* mind, and the other is to appeal to his *reasoning* mind.

A man goes into a clothing store with the firm determination not to pay more than $50 for a suit of clothes. The salesman has him try on a $75 suit and tells him that it makes him look like a banker. The man pays the extra $25 without hesitation because the salesman appealed to his self-pride. The buyer's reasoning mind told him that he could get as much wear out of a $50 suit as he could from the more expensive suit, but the perfectly human desire to look well over-rode his reasoning.

Why Men Pay More for Quality

Another man will pay $50 a month for an apartment in the city when he could get one just as good for $35 in a walk-up building in a less fashionable neighborhood. But love of his family, a strong emotion, makes him pay more rent than he reasons a man with his income ought to pay.

Mr. Moore is a bookkeeper in a small western town. He made up his mind to buy an automobile. After careful consideration he decided it would be a Ford. His reasoning mind told him that the

Ford was the best car he could buy for the money he had to spend. It would go just as fast as a higher priced car. It cost less to run, tires cost less, repairs cost less—in fact there was no doubt in his mind whatever that the Ford was just the car he wanted.

His Wife Didn't Take to Flivvers

But when he told his wife that he was going to buy a Ford she objected violently. She didn't know anything about how cheap it was, or how many gallons of gasoline it used per mile, or how many Ford tires you could buy for the cost of a regular tire, but she did know that she would not have Mrs. Jones next door (who has a Chevrolet) see her jostled around in a flivver. Mr. Moore could get his Ford, if he wanted to, but he didn't need to think that she would ever ride in it, and what was more she didn't want it parked in front of the house, so there!

Of course, Mr. Moore made the usual assertion that he was the boss and what he wanted to do he would do, etc. But just the same he bought a Dodge. And again we see how the feeling mind overcame the reasoning mind.

The emotions which govern the feeling mind are love of self, love of family, love of friends,

desire for power, pride, comfort and convenience. There are others, but these are the leading ones and no quality sale was ever consummated without appealing to one or more of these emotions.

The Quality-Wanting Emotions

Price, the only objection a man has to quality merchandise, exists only in his sense of reasoning. You cannot sense or feel price, but you can sense and feel the other emotions enumerated. As this is a fact, you can set down this principle as a safe rule to follow in selling a quality product:

The desire for quality can best be created in the mind of a buyer by an appeal to the emotions which he senses or feels.

We have seen from the several illustrations previously cited that as a rule our emotions dominate our reason. It therefore follows that if we appeal *first* to these emotions in selling a high priced product, it is possible for us to create such a strong desire for quality that we can impel investigation and desire *without raising the question of price.*

R. L. Wood, now manager of trade sales for John Lucas & Company, paint and varnish mak-

ers, frequently had this experience when he was on the road for his company. He tells of how he sold a hardware jobber whom he was very anxious to sell, but who up to that time had been flirting with "cheaper" lines.

They Never Even Asked the Price

Through another salesman Mr. Wood arranged for a meeting between himself and the entire executive personnel of the company, which had recently been formed by several employees of an old established jobber in the same city. In the interview Mr. Wood never mentioned price once, but confined himself entirely to the quality of the Lucas line, the business-building co-operation which the company had to offer, and described clearly all the advantages of an organization with ideals such as these men held becoming associated with a concern like Lucas that was so well able to help the new concern realize those ideals.

"The next morning," Mr. Wood says, "I submitted the contract to them and they in turn had it approved by their attorneys and then signed it. None of the men I talked to knew the price of a single item in our line until the initial car-load order was invoiced to them. The account has been on our books for a long while, and in every

respect is one of the most satisfactory customers we have established during the fourteen years I have been connected with John Lucas & Company."

III—Laying a Sound Foundation

MANY of the so-called "quality" sales talks used by salesmen sound impressive, but as Mr. Goldberg would say: "they don't mean anything."

A sales manager for one of the big musical instrument houses decided that one of the main reasons why orders were falling off was because his salesmen had forgotten how to put punch into their sales talk. So he called his men in off the road for a convention. A feature of the convention was a "sales-down" wherein each man in turn was required to sell his proposition to as many different dealers who attended the convention by special arrangement. The sales manager was to pass upon each "sale" and award the honors to the man who best succeeded in convincing his "prospect" of the superior quality and consequent superior money-making advantages of this particular line of instruments.

The demonstrations were held in the company's school room, at one end of which a dictagraph was concealed. This machine recorded every word of what was said without the salesman knowing that they were being "clocked." Afterwards the

sales arguments of each man were transcribed on paper. The papers were judged on the basis of the number of statements made by the salesman which could not just as well be made by a competitor. Results showed that more than half of the salesmen had been using a sales talk, which with a few minor exceptions, would sell a competing line just as well as their own!

Cheap Goods Often Carry Quality Labels

The sales manager also was amazed to find that in practically every case his salesmen were ding-donging the word "quality" at the buyer, quite forgetful of the fact that buyers hear so much about "quality," too often from salesmen who are selling anything but a quality line, that they have sickened of it. In this respect it is just like "best made," "nothing to equal them," "wonderful buy," etc. Once upon a time these expressions sold goods, but they have now lost their cutting edge entirely.

This sales manager told his men, and I will pass his tip on to you, never to use the word "quality" in your argument, but to make the quality apparent by inference. He also pointed out the importance of emphasizing one dominant quality point, and driving that home, rather than scatter-

ing your effort over a long list of points which only jumble up the buyer's mind without leaving a lasting impression of quality. The point which he urged his men to use as a foundation for the sale was the reputation of the house. This he said was one quality point that no competitor could use. And he is right.

Quality Is Judged by the House Behind It

Some of the most successful houses in this country have been built up and hold their leadership because their salesmen know the effectiveness of what is called "institutional salesmanship." The idea of institutional salesmanship is to sell the house before attempting to sell the line. It has been demonstrated time after time, by salesmen in every line, that quality is mainly measured by the reputation of the house behind it, and it therefore follows that if you are going to build your sale from the foundation up, and not from the roof down, you must start by selling the house.

"When the armistice was signed," writes B. W. Thayer, vice president of the Minneapolis Knitting Works, "we had our first business depression. We told our salesmen to talk Minneapolis Knitting Works; to sell the company rather than the line. In other words, we felt that we had

established 'M' values, and that we would arrive at a better end should we leave comparisons out of the question, and simply sell the company.

"That we have been successful is without question, as our actual sales this year up to the first of July, in dozens, were twenty-five per cent greater than the entire year of 1919.

An Argument Your Competitor Cannot Meet

"Recently there has been quite a slashing in prices by manufacturers who wished to liquidate their stocks. Many who had always held to fair values cheapened their garments in an effort to make lower prices. We endeavored to make garments of even better value, asking a price that we thought was fair. One of the largest department stores in the middle west, doing perhaps a business of $15,000,000 annually, refused to give one of our salesmen an order because he had been offered another trade-marked line at a reduction in price of perhaps ten per cent. He could not be moved.

"Six months later the writer made a trip east and stopped off to see this particular buyer. I talked to him for perhaps two hours. I did not in any way offer any comparison of values, nor endeavor to cheapen the line he had bought in

place of ours. I did talk to him about his established trade on our garments; the satisfaction that they had always given to consumers. I asked him to call his clerks together and to see if one instance might be found where an 'M' garment had been returned because of dissatisfaction.

He Was Not There to Sell "Goods"

"Beyond this I talked the company and the long standing policy back of it, telling him that I did not want to sell garments, but did want to sell him the Minneapolis Knitting Works; that our signature was on each garment in the form of the 'M' trade-mark, and that that trade-mark meant just as much on one of our garments as our signature did on a letter to him or to his company. In conclusion I asked him to tell me frankly the success he was having with the line he put in in place of ours, and he very honestly admitted that even though he was a buyer for a store selling to the masses, he had made a mistake in displacing our line, defending himself on the ground that business competition was then so acute that buyers were perhaps overlooking values and buying more on the basis of price. The following season that buyer came back to our garments stronger than ever, and today has a complete department of our line."

You will occasionally meet salesmen who will tell you that they believe in selling themselves first and the line whenever it seems convenient. Their idea is to arrange things so that their customers look to them rather than the house, thereby making it possible for the salesman to put his trade up on the auction block should opportunity arise. These men are not deserving of being called salesmen. The reason they are not is too obvious to require explanation. There is only one way to succeed in the business you have embarked upon —and that is to find a good company and tie up to it. Let its success be your success. It may take a little longer, but in the long run it is much the surer and safer. The man who sells his employer short is a hundred times a fool.

His Hobby Was How Rubber Is Made

Finally, you cannot successfully sell quality unless you thoroughly know your line. If you are a wholesale grocery salesman, knowing your line means the ability to walk into a customer's store, pick up, say, a walnut, and be able to tell at a glance in what country it was grown, whether it is of the first quality or not, and about what it is worth a pound. You should know something of the various grades of tea, where grown, their peculiarities of cup flavor, their prices, and so on.

If you sell tires you ought to be able to tell a buyer about the various differences in manufacture that affect the life and character of rubber. One salesman, in order to get first hand information on this point, even went so far as to take a trip to the rubber "belt" in South America. If you sell wire rope you should know something about important competitive tests that have been made, as well as the process of manufacture. Having acquired such information use it to prove merit in what you are selling, rather than to prove that your competitor's goods are without merit. Remember that you are a quality salesman selling a quality product.

He Did Not Know So Lost the Sale

A customer who knew that weight had something to do with the quality of a desk asked a salesman for a furniture house what the weight of a certain desk was. The salesman did not know, nor did he take the trouble to find out.

Taking hold of a corner of the desk and lifting it slightly he remarked that it was "fairly heavy" though. To the salesman the question seemed trivial, and one that could be dodged. But he didn't know that the customer had just finished

reading a mail-order catalogue which had stated that the desk advertised was especially heavy, and that a local dealer would probably ask the same price for a lighter one. But the buyer did not tell the salesman this. Instead, he went out of the store without buying, because the salesman did not know his business. Had he known his business he would have not only known how much the desk he was selling weighed, but would have been able to tell the buyer the why of the extra weight.

The well-posted salesman not only understands these little points of superiority that put his merchandise into the quality class, but he is careful to use descriptive phrases that impart a quality atmosphere. When a salesman realizes the difference in sales value between "selected material" and "loft-dried hickory"; between "strongest wagon ever built" and "our wagons are tested with a dead weight of 8,000 pounds," he has taken a big step forward in successfully selling quality.

IV—Making the Buyer Want Quality

THE next step in selling quality is to make the buyer *want* quality. You must unsell him on what he has been buying, for unless a man is convinced that what he does now, or what he is using now, is not right, he will not change.

Therefore you must sooner or later, and the sooner the better, in your canvass reach the delicate point of just what the trouble is with what your prospect is already buying. Until you have brought your prospect up to the point where he wants something better than what he is now buying or using he will remain indifferent to quality arguments.

In unselling your man on his present ways of doing business, or creating in his mind the feeling that the present lines he handles are not as good as they could be, you will, of course, be careful not to antagonize him by implying that you know his business better than he does, or that you are in any way criticizing his business judgment.

Illustrating the importance of making the buyer want quality before attempting to sell it to him, a former president of the American Bronze Cor-

poration, J. W. Watson, once wrote a letter to his sales manager. He said he had noticed that the men were laying too much stress on the importance of their company and the long list of prominent manufacturers who used Non-Gran metal, and not enough stress on what the metal would do for them. He pointed out that back in the old days when he was the sales force there were no such arguments to use for the company was practically unknown, but nevertheless he was able to bring home the bacon by carefully thinking out his canvass.

Selling Quality vs. Getting Orders

"One of the first things my experience taught me," Mr. Watson said in this letter, "was that it was useless to tell a prospect how good Non-Gran was and why it was good. Many a time have I spent a good half-hour or a good hour with a man telling him about Non-Gran quality and the 'whys' of this quality. After succeeding in convincing him of its superior quality he would sit back in his chair and frankly admit that it was superior to the metal he was using. I would then sit up and get ready to take his order, only to be told that the metal he was using was really satisfactory for its duties and that he would therefore not

be warranted in paying a higher price for this superior quality which he did not need.

"Finally, we woke up to the fact that by the above method of procedure we were simply butting our heads into stone walls. I convinced all we called on that our product was superior, but I got no business.

It's Not What It Is, But What It Does

"Here is the point I want to bring out, and I hope I can bring it out clearly enough and strongly enough so that each of our men will get it in his head and get it there so firmly that it will never for a moment jump out. Before you can make the buyer want Non-Gran metal you have to make them want Non-Gran quality.

"We can't make our prospect want a better quality unless we can show him that a better quality of bearings will help him. The minute we do show him and convince him that a better quality of bearings will help him he will not be content until he finds some better quality. It is then, and not until then, that we should take up the steps in convincing him of Non-Gran's superior qualities. Our prospect will be keenly interested in listening to all we have to say and show about quality after he has been made to want superior quality, but

his interest in quality will only be passive if he isn't first made to want additional quality.

He Took the Machine Apart

"There may be many ways to make a prospect want to install finer quality bearing in the machines he is producing, but I am frank to admit that so far I have only discovered one. This way, and I can also state that it has been a very successful way, consists in an analysis of the prospect's machine. Pull his machine apart, piece by piece. Analyze each of those pieces to determine its probable life with relation to all of the other pieces. The prospect becomes very much interested and absorbed in this process. The object of the discussion is not to sell him bearing bronze, but to work out with him a way to increase the first life of the machines he is putting on the market. Let us say, for example, that the prospect is a manufacturer of engine lathes.

"Our first question will be to ask him if he would be interested in increasing the first life of every engine lathe he turned out—increase the number of productive hours which this lathe would give before it had to be torn to pieces for overhauling. He would be a queer sort of human being if he were to say 'No' and kick us out of

the door. Ninety-nine prospects out of a hundred will show that they are real human beings and say 'Sure.' That then is our cue to sit down and 'go to it.'

Finding the Weak Link in the Chain

"We now proceed something like this: 'Well, Mr. Prospect, there is only one way in which it will be possible to increase the first life of your lathes and that way is to find out what part, or what parts, of all the hundreds of parts which go to make up the lathe, are the first to give out in service and thus require a shutting down of the lathe for repairs or renewals. In other words, Mr. Prospect, there may be some parts in your lathe which will stay perfectly good for ten or fifteen years and other parts which will only stay good for one or two years. It is obvious, Mr. Prospect, that to increase the quality of the ten or fifteen year parts would not increase the first life of the lathe by as much as one second. What we want to find is the part, or parts, which now give out first. If we can increase the life of that part five minutes we will increase the life of the whole machine by that same five minutes. If we can increase the life of that part by one year we can increase the first life of the whole machine by just that one year.'

"So far, our prospect is absolutely with us—the above facts are too obvious for any argument or disagreement.

"It is now time for us to start tearing his machine down, piece by piece. First, let us tackle the base or the legs of the lathe. He will agree in a minute that this base or these legs will be just as good at the end of twenty years as they are the day they are first set up.

Adding a Year to Its Life

"We, in this way, go over all the pieces making up the machine, lathe, drill press, electric motor, printing press, automobile or what not, until we find the part or parts which, logically, in service give out first. This part may be found to be a trigger in some automatic feature of the machine. In this case the prospect should give his attention to bettering the quality and lengthening the life of this trigger. By so doing, he will thus increase the first life of the entire machine. In this case we cannot help him increase the first life of the machine and therefore have nothing to offer.

"If, however, the analysis shows that some wear-subjected part is the 'weak brother,' then we certainly can help him and he will be keen to be helped. He will then want better quality in this

bearing part because he will have sufficient business instinct to know that by spending one or two dollars, may be only fifty or sixty cents, for increased quality in this part he will be adding hundreds of productive hours to the entire machine."

Mr. Watson's letter has been cited here at length in spite of the wide gulf between what you sell and bearing metal, because it shows exactly how one sales force successfully applied the principle of making the buyer want quality before attempting to sell him quality. If this important principle is the only suggestion which you are able to carry out from these pages you will have made a big step forward toward your goal of being a quality salesmen.

People Don't Want Cheap Things— They Only Think They Do

Incidentally, E. G. Anderson, the man to whom this letter was written as sales manager, caught the idea so well, and was able in turn to so impregnate his salesmen with it, that a most remarkable stimulus was given to the sales of his company. It is not surprising, therefore, when the time came to appoint a successor to Mr. Watson, the president, that Mr. Anderson was selected for the post. It is just one more example

of a salesman who reached the top by thoroughly mastering the principles that underly selling a quality product.

"A merchant's natural instinct to buy as cheaply as possible often throws us off the right track and leads us along the line of least resistance," says L. H. Thompson of the Detroit selling force of the National Cash Register Company. "Very often a merchant will say that he wants a cheap cash register. We take his word for it and show him a cheap second hand one, which in many cases is not in keeping with size of his business or the needs of his store. I have learned to absolutely disregard the merchant's request for a cheap machine.

A Man Sold on Quality Stays Sold

"I first find out his needs, and then endeavor to show him how the 'cheapest' machine would by all means eventually become the 'dearest.'" Mr. Thompson has put his finger on a weak point of many salesmen. They would rather make a quick, easy sale, than to take a little more time, and consummate a sale that would mean more to both them and to the buyer. When a buyer realizes that you are going to some trouble to find out how many clerks he has, the amount of business han-

dled, and other details so as to be able to make a recommendation of the machine that is actually suited to his needs he is apt to forget 'cheap machines' and buy a machine that is a credit to his store.

Appeal to a Buyer's Bigger Self

During the recent crisis a great many business heads forsook their mahogany desks and went out on the road and sold goods. Time after time the head of the business, or his sales manager, has gone into a salesman's territory and taken out business which the salesman "positively knew" wasn't there to be taken. The salesman alibied himself by saying that it was the title on the card that did it. But such was not the case. It was because the bigger business man approached the problem from its bigger side. He doesn't talk about such petty things as a few cents in price, but on the contrary he shows how the purchase of this article will solve some problem that has to do with the life of the business.

J. W. Wiley, secretary of the Vitrolite Company, relates an instance that well illustrates what I mean. Vitrolite is used for table tops, toilet partitions and the like. It is considerably higher in price than competitive materials. In the case of this particular sale the Vitrolite salesman's price

was $5,000 against the lowest competitor's price of $2,600. The competitive material looked like Vitrolite so far as the eye was concerned, but unlike Vitrolite it could be written upon with a pencil. The Vitrolite salesman closed the sale by telling the school board, who were buying it for toilet partitions, that they were as much responsible for the school children's moral welfare as they were for their physical welfare, as indicated by the desire for sanitary toilet rooms. He told them how it was possible for one child to corrupt the morals of hundreds of children by writing obscene matter on toilet room partitions. They knew what the salesman said was true and installed Vitrolite partitions.

V—How to Create a Quality Atmosphere

HAVE you ever noticed the advertisements for Community silverware?

This advertising has been held by many authorities to be some of the best "copy" appearing in current magazines. Yet when you come to analyze the ad you find that the text when taken by itself is quite commonplace. So far as the illustration of the product itself goes, the design is not a great deal better, one way or the other, than a host of other designs advertised by other houses. What is there then about the advertisements for Community plate that makes them so effective? *It is the atmosphere of quality which the builder of the advertisement has woven into it.*

In one piece of copy, for example, he has laid the silverware on the tastily set table of a leader of New York's Four Hundred. In doing so he adroitly establishes the point that plated table silver is used on the best of tables, and the association of the silver with the priceless lunch cloths, rare chinaware and rich table settings lifts it out of the "just as good" class and gives it an atmosphere of quality that cannot be denied.

In another advertisement a lone table spoon is laid on a rare piece of lace and reproduced as a page advertisement in the magazines. The feminine eye quickly appraises the value of the lace, and subconsciously associates the lace and the silverware. Thus an impression of quality is registered by the simple expedient of using an article of known quality to create the impression of quality in another product.

This Salesman Had a Simple Plan

It is not practical, of course, for a salesman to take rare bits of lace valued at thousands of dollars with him on the road to use in giving a quality atmosphere to his selling talk, but there are many things which you can do to produce the same effect.

A salesman selling Chandler automobiles made a list of a dozen mechanical features found in three cars selling at over $5,000 which were also found in the Chandler but were not found in any other car selling at the Chandler price. For example, the Bosch magneto, found in the Chandler and the Pierce-Arrow, the noiseless chain drive found in the Chandler and the Packard, etc. When his tabulation was completed he cut out from the catalogues of the respective cars illustrations that

brought out each point, and pasted them in a book side by side with a similar illustration of the Chandler. In selling a prospective buyer on Chandler quality, the salesman would open his binder with its convincing illustrations, and turn the pages one by one as his sales talk progressed.

The "Birds of a Feather" Plan

A grocery salesman establishes a quality atmosphere about a line of preserves that he sells by showing the dealer photographs of a window display in one of Park & Tilford's New York stores where his preserves had been given a prominent position.

William Maxwell, in an article in Collier's, tells how a salesman for a high priced saw created a quality atmosphere upon approaching the buyer. "A good many years ago," writes Mr. Maxwell, "a friend of mine who knows the underworld pretty well introduced me to some of its more or less celebrated characters. One of them, a confidence man, said to me: 'It's all a mistake to salve a man when you want to get him hooked. You want to act like you don't think he has got the brains or the coin to go through with the proposition. Put it up to him so he'll have to hook himself in order

to show you that your opinion of him ain't high enough.'

"This roughly phrased fragment of philosophy did not make much of an impression upon me until I began to test it upon myself. Then I realized that an almost certain way to gain my attention would be to imply the lack of some quality in me which I believed myself to possess. Of course, if the implication were made in an offensive form, my antagonism as well as my attention would be aroused. Evidently the implication would be very faint; just enough to make a man concentrate his mind upon you—if for no other purpose than to prove to you that he is a bigger or a more clever man than you seem to realize."

How to Make the Buyer Come to You

Acting on this line of reasoning, Mr. Maxwell goes on to say that he proceeded to frame a question which would, without giving offense, imply that he didn't think the dealer he was talking to had an organization that was capable of a high-grade, high-priced saw. Invariably the simple question: "Have you an organization that can sell a high grade saw?" did the work, as will be seen from three natural answers which a dealer would in all probability make to the question.

If he was already selling quality saws the buyer would reply: "We're doing it now." To which reply Mr. Maxwell would simply say: "I guess I didn't make it clear to you what kind of saw I mean." And the buyer, completely disarmed would ask: "Well, what kind do you mean?"

"We Are Satisfied With What We Have"

Or the buyer might reply to Mr. Maxwell's approach: "We are handling the very best saw on the market now."

"I'm talking about a different kind of saw."

"What kind are you talking about?"

The dealer who is not handling a quality saw will probably come back with: "What we have satisfies us." The reply to this is: "But your organization could sell a high grade saw, couldn't it?" (Which brings the buyer back to where he was in the first place.)

The bearing of the salesman, his address, even the clothes he wears, are factors in creating an atmosphere of quality for a product. In the same way that prospective buyers of Community silverware received an impression of quality from the setting of the advertisement, so the buyer of your merchandise receives an impression of quality from your personal appearance.

To be successful in selling quality you must live up to the standards of excellence set by your company. To most of your customers you are the company. Make it your business to see that the association of your goods and your appearance in the customer's mind is that of quality.

This does not mean that you must wear expensive clothes and be dressed in the latest Fifth Avenue style. Indeed, over-dressing is just as unwise as careless dressing. But it does mean that you should make it a point to get your shoes shined every morning, keep your clothes neatly pressed, and your linen clean and well chosen. Never forget that a gentleman is judged by his linen. You cannot expect your customers to treat you as a gentleman if you have the ear marks of a second rater.

VI—Getting Your Price

BY *itself,* an article is neither good or bad, long or short, warm or cold, hard or soft.

Quality can only be shown by comparing it with something else called a standard, an average or some other similar thing.

This is a fundamental principle of salesmanship which is sometimes referred to as the Einstein theory of relativity. A very good illustration of the law of relativity is cited by Dr. A. Holmes, president of Drake University. "Fifty degrees is cold in the fall, warm in the spring," says Dr. Holmes. "One traveler coming down a mountain strips off his coat in a lather of perspiration and meets another coming up shivering cold.

"Preserves are sweet if you have just eaten a pickle, sour if you have just eaten ice cream.

"Place one hand in hot water and the other in cold water, then place both in water of the same temperature and it will feel cold to one hand and warm to the other. Which is it, hot or cold? The answer depends on relativity."

So you see that the quality assigned by a buyer to any fact or thing or condition will be determined by what has gone before and especially by what has gone just before. The identical quality

of what you sell may be poor in the eyes of a man who has been buying a better quality or it may be better in the eyes of a man who has been buying an inferior quality. Therefore it is necessary for you to take quality from its isolation and *surround it with other facts* which will serve as a basis for measurement. When you do this, a price which otherwise might seem prohibitive immediately dwindles until it seems of little consequence compared to the value you offer.

An Order Worth Taking Is Worth Taking Right

One salesman who used this principle with marked success in selling aluminum goods, was G. D. Colburn, now general manager of the Dilver Manufacturing Company. Mr. Colburn realized that he could not obtain full success in his work unless he sold large orders. The salesmen who were just getting by were the salesmen who sold only fill-in numbers to the housewife. He reasoned that it was almost as easy to sell a woman a complete outfit as it was to sell her a few items, provided the sales presentation was worked out to overcome her resistance to price. It was not much of a trick to get a woman to want a pantry filled with clean, white aluminum utensils, but she hesitated at paying the extra price to get the quality.

When the price objection came up Mr. Colburn would say: "Mrs. Smith, this piano of yours must have cost at least $500. How often do you use it? Every other day, or perhaps twice a week? You may consider it a satisfactory investment at that. Then there is the Victrola over there—you must have paid two hundred for that and another hundred for records. How often do you use that? And that expensive set of books — do you get your money's worth from them?"

How to "Fade-out" a Big Price

Mrs. Smith being human is thus placed in the position where she has to justify an expenditure that is not essential to her existence. She hastens to explain to the salesman the numerous pleasures and advantages of having a piano and a Victrola in her home. Compared to the advantages she is able to cite the several hundred dollars thus invested seems small indeed. When she has had her say, the salesman says:

"Mrs. Smith, you are to be complimented on your progressive ideas. As you say, we are only on this earth a few years at best. While we are here we ought to give ourselves all the pleasure we can. Now, your kitchenware is something that you use every day of your life for an important purpose. Proper cooking is the very foundation

of good health. A hundred dollars would be a mighty small amount for such an investment as compared with other expenditures on equipment not nearly so essential, and which you use much less frequently."

The big trouble with most of us is that we get an idea into our heads that our customers won't pay the price, and feeling that way, it is not at all surprising that they won't. Let this fact sink in: *There is no such thing as a customer who won't pay the price if the salesman knows how to sell quality.*

He Knew They Were Too High Priced

A very good illustration of this truism is revealed in the experience of a Wooltex salesman. A Wooltex dealer had recently asked permission to return a number of high priced Vanity suits which had been sent to him for his annual style show on the grounds that the garments were too high priced for his trade. The salesman in whose territory this dealer was located had heard that old chestnut hundreds of times before. He knew that when a dealer talked about prices being too high for his trade that the trouble was with the dealer and not with the trade. So he paid him a visit. "Give me a chance," said he to the dealer,

"and I'll demonstrate to you that there is just as much demand as ever by your trade for quality merchandise."

So the dealer, with nothing to lose and much to gain, gave him a chance.

The Salesman Went Behind the Counter

Pretty soon a woman came into the store to buy a suit. Without making the mistake of prematurely asking her how much she wanted to pay for it, the Wooltex salesman had her try on one of the most expensive garments in the line—a beautifully embroidered tricotine model. It fitted the customer to perfection. She was delighted with it.

So as to emphasize the beauty and elegance of this garment, the Wooltex salesman showed her next one of the lower priced suits, a simple serge model. But once she had seen herself in the first garment she could not be satisfied with anything else. She was shown one or two other Vanity suits so that she should not be limited in her choice, but she agreed that no matter what it cost she must have the better suit.

And she bought it, paying nearly twice as much as the dealer claimed the average woman would spend on a suit this year.

"All right," you'll say. "But she's an exception." That's the very point. How can you tell which buyers are the exceptions, which the average, or in fact how much the average customer is willing to pay unless you do a little experimenting in salesmanship?

When the buyer raises price objections it is poor salesmanship to take the objection too seriously. Above all avoid becoming involved in an argument, and don't ever challenge the buyer by directly disagreeing with him. Remember that when you win an argument you are more than likely to lose the sale.

In many cases, depending of course, on the type of man you are dealing with, an indirect story, told in a good natured way will often knock the props from under a price objection better than a half hour's labored conversation. Here is a story that one salesman uses to refute price objections that may suggest something to you:

How One Salesman Belittles Price

"Once upon a time there was a man who bought an unknown brand of clothes at $20 and figured he had made a wonderful buy. At the same time he was after a $5,000 a year job. You guessed it. The man who was doing the hiring got the

impression that the man who was after the job was a failure. Now how much did the clothes cost—twenty dollars or $5,020?"

To do the work a story of this kind must be snappy. If it is drawn out it will kill the action in your canvass and only serve to accentuate the price difficulty.

It may not be out of place to say here, that this holds true in all other phases of selling. There is altogether too much conversation in the average sales solicitation. Get over the idea that you have to talk your man into buying. This can be done, but such sales are mostly unsatisfactory. They breed cancellations and return goods. *The order that stays sold is the order that the buyer has sold to himself.* The secret of getting buyers to sell themselves is to ask questions.

The Purchasing Agent Backed Down

There is a story in a book of Hindu philosophy about an old teacher who had a pupil that was one of the "show-me" kind. He was filled with doubts and raised many questions. But the old man answered none. He just sat there in silence. By degrees the doubts of the younger man faded and vanished. The old man's attitude did in a few seconds what hours of oratory and sledge-hammer proof would never have done.

A sales talk that simply uses trickery to keep the buyer off the price question is not properly planned. The buyer's first thought is, "How much does it cost?" To steer him off the question may convey the impression that even you believe the price is too high. With a view toward properly handling this situation, G. Gale Signore, who has successfully sold quality products for twenty years, uses a plan that effectively puts the price in the background.

The Buyer Forgot to Ask the Price

In illustrating his methods, Mr. Signore tells of an Iowa buyer who recently came to Chicago to trade, stopping in Mr. Signore's office to purchase canned fruit to replace stock that had been sold from his shelves. Some months previously this buyer had purchased the store and a certain brand of fruit was in stock, although he felt it was not worth while carrying such high priced products as a rule.

He first told the buyer about the middle-aged and elderly women who were employed for peeling the peaches in their factory, pointing out that the beautiful appearance of most canned peaches was obtained by picking them while green and peeling them with a lye solution.

This brought him to a point which food products salesmen claim is one of the most difficult obstacles to encounter in selling high quality peaches like the brand he sold. Their appearance is very much against them. The peaches have a "scrubby" appearance. Appearance must be sacrificed to get the flavor. So true is this that the buyer must be prepared for the shock obtained upon opening a can of that brand of peaches. While this would seem to be the most objectionable point of the product, Mr. Signore has succeeded in turning it into one of his strongest selling points.

Having prepared the mind of the buyer, and caused the buyer to want to taste the peach, he unwrapped a small fibre dish and fibre spoon, opened the can and placed a couple of slices on the dish. This avoids the usual method of messing around in the can with a pen knife.

The Iowa buyer was perfectly satisfied with the product. But he took a final fling at his original theory that these products cost too much and he did not feel that he could handle them, stating he thought they would not sell. Mr. Signore then said:

"If the fruit cost you a dollar a can and you could put your profit on top of that and sell it,

what would you care how much it cost? All you are interested in is the profit you are going to make on it and the future business it is going to build for you. The lady who buys three cans of cheap peaches and finds one of them or all three of them not so tasty as they might be, is going to be peeved at herself for buying them and peeved at you as well. You may not lose her as a customer, but she will not have any more desire for that product. On the other hand, if she is sold one of these cans, she will not stop buying them. And as to whether they will sell, your competitors all around you are selling them and the fruits are being sold all over Chicago in face of the country's greatest competition."

The result was that this plan, which is followed by most of that company's salesmen, sold this buyer just as it has hundreds of others. It sold the buyer so thoroughly that he said he felt he could easily sell many of the peaches, for example, by merely telling the customer how the elderly women peeled them just as mother used to do. He placed a big order for fruit in addition to the vegetable order, without knowing or caring what the price of many of the items in the shipment was to be.

VII—Making a Big Price Seem Small

IN "easing" a high price to a close-fisted buyer it is often well to use percentages. Saunders Norvell tells of a man who had suddenly acquired a large fortune and decided to build a fine house. This man was just the rough type of business man. He did not care very much about art, literature or music. The wife, however, was much more cultured than her husband. She had aspirations. When they decided to build a fine house she read up quite a little on architecture. She talked to architects. She read some of the magazines in regard to the interior decoration of homes.

This man and his wife called at the hardware house and the husband said: "We came to buy some locks and hinges for our house; also some window latches. You have the specifications—what will the outfit cost?"

The salesman who was the late John Hall of the Simmons Hardware Company understood his business thoroughly. He sized up the situation at a glance, and asked the husband and wife if they would not be seated while he talked to them a little while on the subject of builder's hardware from the standpoint of interior decoration. He

illustrated his talk by showing them certain designs of hardware. He compared some of these designs with the ordinary and every-day thing in locks and hinges. He called their attention to the total value of their house—to the large amounts they were paying interior decorators and especially emphasized the fact that the bill for the hardware for their house would be a very small percentage of the total value.

He Sold Art—Not Hardware

The wife, of course, was very much interested because she knew something of the subject. The husband himself allowed his cigar to go out and he was also impressed by the difference between simply having locks and hinges for a door as compared with having metal work that would be an object of beauty as well as utility; but after listening for some thirty minutes, he became impatient and said—"Well, I've enjoyed all this talk very much, but what I want to know is what this hardware is going to cost." By this time, however, he had come more or less under the spell of the salesman.

He had seen gold and silver-plated hardware. He had admired the beauties of cut-glass knobs. He saw there was a real difference between cut-

glass and porcelain and gold-plate and japan-work. Besides that the salesman had made a very favorable personal impression. He turned to the husband and remarked—"My dear sir, you have an entire misconception of what I am doing. I am not selling you hardware. I am selling you high art!"

$3,000 Seems a Lot—3% Seems Little

The husband gasped but smiled grimly. He saw the point. Then the salesman said gently—"To carry out your interior scheme of decoration in an artistic way will cost about $3,000. As the contract for your house amounts to $100,000 you will note that this is only 3% of the total cost of the building."

Now, if the salesman in this case had said right in the beginning: "The hardware for your house will cost $3,000"—the chances are he would have lost the sale. The wife was with him but it was necessary for him to convert the husband. The husband had never before in his life bought fancy hardware, so he had no idea of what it cost, but he was an intelligent man and he saw that it would be absurd to have cheap hardware in magnificently decorated rooms. He was convinced that it would be absurd, for instance, to have

hardware in a room decorated in the style of Louis XIV with porcelain knobs and japanned escutcheons. He was educated to the fact that there were period designs in hardware as well as in wall decorations.

Eliminating First Cost Objections

Still another commonly used plan which has possibilities is to keep the price in the background until after the profit-making qualities have been thoroughly explained to the buyer. Then when the buyer asks the price answer it, Yankee fashion, with a question.

There was a Montana merchant who had just passed through four years of crop failures and the salesman was selling him a cabinet to contain his biscuits and cookies.

The merchant had become thoroughly enthused with the cabinet and its possibilities; the salesman fully realized that had he quoted him a price the sale would not be made.

So when the merchant started to ask the price, the salesman said, "I will show you just what this cabinet costs you. Mr. Gerber, do you feel in your own mind that this cabinet would increase your business $50.00 a month?" "No, I do not." "Do you feel it would increase your business $30.00?"

No, he did not. "Would it increase your business $25.00?" He still doubted it. "Would it increase your business $20.00?" "Yes," he said, "I believe the cabinet would increase my business $20.00 a month."

A Flat Quotation Would Have Killed the Sale

"Very well then, Mr. Gerber, that cabinet will really cost you nothing. Your increased business will pay for it if you will sell $15.00 per month more cookies and biscuits from the receptacle than you have sold before. This is $5.00 a month under your own estimate."

The cabinet, as a silent salesman, paid its own way. Naming the price of $75.00 to a man with four years of crop failures, would have made it next to impossible to have sold him. By following this plan the salesman has sold in the neighborhood of twenty-five cabinets the first month over his territory. This shows that by the proper wording of the sales talk the sting of the price can be taken out.

On the other hand, many successful salesmen believe that it is poor salesmanship to appear afraid of your price. They prefer to come out with it boldly and courageously at the very outset of the sales talk as though it were your best talking

point. The star salesman for The Measuregraph Company does this. He sells a machine priced at $175. That looks big to the average merchant for such a small instrument—which is just exactly how the salesman wants it to look. The first thought that comes into the buyer's mind is what makes it cost so much, and this question the salesman proceeds to answer. When he has finished, the numerous things which the machine will do for the merchant so over-shadow its cost that the high price objection is completely removed.

Dodge But Don't Seem to Be Dodging

This salesman contends that if you follow the usual custom of leaving the price until the last you will bring your man up to the point where he is just about ready to sign up and throw a bombshell into the whole proposition when you spring the $175 price. That there is some truth to his contention is demonstrated by the fact that in an organization trained to leave the price to the last, he has been a consistent as well as a spectacular producer of business.

Whether it is best to "ease the price to a buyer" or set the price on a pedestal and point to it with pride is a matter which you must decide for yourself. Your personality, your customer's outlook,

and many other conditions must be considered. One salesman, for many years a leader in the Y & E organization says: "If I think that a customer's mind will be free by quoting the price early in the interview I most certainly would do so. If on the other hand I feel that the mention of price might produce a premature adverse decision I would side-step. In selling cement hardeners the price was a serious question. It usually came up early in the interview, long before I had an opportunity to prove the superior profit making quality of the product. I overcame the obstacle by quoting a price of so many cents a square foot, which of course was a small sum and usually satisfied him for the moment."

As a general rule in handling price it is best to dodge it at the beginning of the interview provided you can do so without giving your customer the impression you are dodging. The common practice of telling a customer that you will come to the price by and by is not to be commended, in spite of the fact that so many salesmen are using it.

VIII—Price Objections as Talking Points

IN disposing of price objections it must be borne in mind that they are of two kinds—the real objection and the excuse.

The last mentioned variety is very likely to show itself at the beginning of the sale. It is the outward expression of the natural perversity in human nature which makes us instinctively oppose everything, no matter how helpful or valuable it may really be. Business men are secretly afraid of being "done," and self-preservation has created this habit just as nature makes us close our eyes unconsciously when danger threatens.

The best way to proceed in such cases is to disregard the excuse and play on the prospective buyer's curiosity. It is the one faculty that is more powerful in its operation than his natural perversity.

It is a simple matter to classify these stock excuses and prepare replies for each of them which will arouse a man's curiosity. In this way you can get his attention, the first step in making a sale.

In planning your replies to these stock excuses,

however, bear in mind that there are two kinds of attention—favorable and unfavorable.

There are salesmen who think it is clever, when the prospect brings up a stock excuse, to make a smart answer. A hardware salesman traveling for one of the big Eastern houses follows the plan of "kidding" the objector. When a dealer tells him his line is too high priced the salesman slaps the dealer on the back and knowingly replies: "Sure it is, the law of compensation is still working isn't it?"

Don't Side Track the Buyer

Such tactics may occasionally succeed, but in the long run smart salesmanship is a mistake. It doesn't pay. It only leaves the buyer up in the air and takes him off the mental track which you have laid for him. The right kind of reply will gain attention and at the same time *push the prospect in the direction which you wish him to go.*

The sincere objection to price is usually encountered after the buyer has been carried through the stages of attention and desire. It is caused by a state of deliberation in which the buyer's feelings are drawing him in one direction

but his brain and natural conservation as a business man pulls him in another.

When an objection of this sort is encountered use it to help make the sale. Do not be content with merely answering the question. It can just as easily be turned into a reason for buying, but it must be done without antagonizing or boring your man. Ask certain questions in reply to the objection which can be answered by the prospect only in a certain way, thereby giving you entire control of the interview.

"Qualifying" Quality Prospects

A Hussman refrigerator salesman meets the bona-fide price objection by asking the butcher if he is in business to stay or if he is going to sell out within a few months. The butcher usually answers one way or the other. If he is going to sell out, then there is no use of the salesman's wasting any further time on him. If he says that he is in business to stay, which most butchers are, then the salesman says:

"Now, Mr. Brown, I want to ask you a question and I want you to answer it frankly. Across the street are two buildings. One is a brick flat building and the other a frame dwelling. Suppose I owned both of those buildings. If I could make

you a proposition whereby with a slightly higher first payment you could make enough from the rent of the brick building to meet your payments and put a tidy sum in the bank every month, you would consider the brick building a much better buy than the frame building wouldn't you?

Who Wants to Buy a Question Mark?

"And you would buy the brick building in a minute, whereas you would hesitate a long time before buying the frame building, even though it only cost one-fifth as much, wouldn't you?

"Of course, you would, any business man would, because when he buys the frame building he buys a question mark. He has no way of knowing how many hundreds of dollars he will have to spend every year to keep it in repair. He doesn't know when the foundations will rot out, or the shingles begin to come out. It is built of cheap materials, and it is a cheap building. But with the brick building it is different."

With an appreciation of quality established in the buyer's mind this Hussman salesman then continues:

"Our refrigerator is a good deal like those two buildings. We have set out to build a case that is

as good as we can make it, and one that will pay you the biggest returns *over a period of time.*

"We built up our business by giving butchers the best case that we can produce at the lowest possible price. Of course, I am very much interested in what you say about our competitor's cases. The very fact that our case is being imitated is a high compliment for us, because only good things are imitated. It shows that our case has merit.

Putting Competition Into the Imitator Class

"As a practical business man yourself, you know that it is not possible for any manufacturer to make the very best case he knows how, and then let his competitors dictate the price for which he must sell it. It simply can't be done. If it were a mere matter of building our freezer display case *down to a price and not up to our standard,* we are satisfied that we could build you a case that would cost from $200 to $250 less money than our list price and still have a case that *looks* every bit as good or even better than the one offered you by the other manufacturers you mention. But I'm going to tell you why we don't build that kind of case, and why, inasmuch as you intend to stay in business, you don't want this kind of case in your store."

In this procedure the salesman has simply taken the buyer's objection to a high price and used it as proof of quality. The buyer's common sense tells him that what the salesman says is true. The high price convinces him that the Hussman case has quality features which other cases lack, otherwise they could not get two or three hundred dollars more for their refrigerator than their competitors and still continue in business. Salesmen for the Addressograph Company are usually able to convince a price objector that the machine they sell is the one they want by simply stating that in spite of the fact that the Addressograph is the highest priced addressing equipment of all, more Addressographs are sold than all the other addressing machines put together.

A Poser for the Bargain Hunter

This tendency to measure quality by the price tag becomes especially pronounced when the quality is not visible to the eye. In such cases a low price may easily be more of a handicap to a salesman than a help, as is shown by the experience of a salesman employed by one of the big Cincinnati paper houses. This salesman heard that a manufacturer in Columbus was in the market for several tons of paper. He jumped on a train and soon was in the manufacturer's office. He was

able to convince the manufacturer that his house could give him the service he required, and the manufacturer gave him samples of the paper which he had used last year and asked the salesman to quote on a similar sheet. The salesman recognized the sheet as being made by a mill which was affiliated with his house, but said nothing to the manufacturer.

The Cheap Price Made Him Suspicious

A few days later the salesman returned to Columbus with samples of the identical sheet of paper, made by the same mill to the same specifications. He quoted a price which he knew was below that which any other jobber could quote and fully expected to be favored with the business. Imagine his surprise when the manufacturer, after a casual examination of the sample, declared that he did not believe the sample was the same grade of paper. The salesman did his best to convince the manufacturer that it was, but the manufacturer refused to be convinced. Finally the salesman asked the buyer point blank why he thought the sample was not as good a sheet of paper as that which he had previously used:

"Your price is so much under that of your competitor that I can't help but feel the sample you submit is of inferior quality."

The salesman said: "My price *is* somewhat lower then?"

"Yes, it is, but the house from whom I received the other quotation is a very large concern and I have always found it to be reliable, and I know that it would not try to secure an unreasonable profit on its goods."

Well, the outcome of it was that the salesman had to have the mill send the skeptical manufacturer a small quantity of the paper for an actual test before he could convince the manufacturer that his price was not too low for the quality he wanted. If the salesman had quoted a higher price, only a fraction of a cent or so below that of his competitor, the manufacturer would probably never have questioned the quality and the salesman could have secured the order more easily. As it was the low price proved more of a disadvantage than an advantage.

IX—Beating the Price Cutter at His Own Game

NOBODY likes a price cutter. Even those who give him business do so reluctantly. There is always a question in the buyer's mind whether he could not have purchased for less if he had held out longer, and the lingering suspicion that perhaps someone else is getting a better price. This attitude was nicely expressed by Robert Nicholas, owner of a bustling hardware store in one of Chicago's suburbs.

"If there is anything I detest," said Mr. Nicholas, in a recent issue of *The Hardware Salesman*, "it is the salesman who always seems to be able to find a loophole to quote a lower price. The kind of salesman I want to do business with is the fellow who will quote you a low price, and then walk out of the store without an order before he will cut the price.

"Only a few moments ago there was a salesman in to see me who offered a new item. I felt that it had merit and selling possibilities, but I was afraid the price was too high. I said that it looked to me as if the price might be lowered. I did not know, in this instance, that a lower price could be obtained, but as I said, the price seemed high.

When I made the price objection the salesman looked me straight in the eye and said, 'Mr. Nicholas, that is the best price I have, I cannot cut it one cent!' And there was something in his tone of voice that made me believe him. So I gave him the order.

One Price Men Never Challenged

"Of course on staple articles we usually know whether or not the price is right. We soon learn which salesman can be talked into quoting a lower price. Those who establish themselves as one price men, are never questioned in this store.

"But once a man cuts a price, we feel that a battle over prices is necessary each time we give an order, and even after the order is placed we still have a notion that we might have been able to get a lower price, had we insisted a while longer. Then, of course, there is the feeling that possibly one of our friendly rivals down the street may be getting even a lower price."

In these days when orders are sparse it takes courage to stand by your guns and firmly, yet tactfully, insist on your price. There are times when to do so will mean the loss of an order. But in the long run this policy pays, for ultimately

you will establish yourself as a one-price salesman representing a one-price house.

Buyers Are Paid to Kick at Prices

Salesmen should remember that purchasing agents make their living on the pennies that they are able to squeeze out of sellers. They are adepts at the fine art of preying on the fears of order-hungry salesmen. In selling this type of buyer it is often a question of which is the better salesman, the seller or the buyer. When the salesman gets his price he sells the purchasing agent. When the purchasing agent gets what he wants at *his* price he does the selling instead of the salesman.

Austin A. Breed, president of the casket manufacturing firm of Crane and Breed, tells a story on one of his salesmen which shows how it is possible for a buyer to sell a salesman without the salesman even knowing that he is being sold.

The salesman was sent to see a certain customer who was represented to be in the market for a large purchase. The buyer had also written two other concerns to have salesmen call, especially requesting that they call at a designated hour.

After the three competitors had a chance to cool their heels in the outside office and work up

their anxiety and fear as to what the other fellow would do, the buyer had them shown into separate rooms. To each man he gave a copy of the specifications. "Now," he said, "get busy and figure out the best price that you can make me on this material."

In a half hour he sent the office boy around to collect the bids. He then personally went to each salesman and said: "I believe you will have to do better. Go over your figures again."

Price Fear Makes Salesmen Easy Prey

The buyer sent the office boy around three times after that returning the last bid, but saying nothing. One of the salesmen threw up his hands on the fourth round, another on the fifth. But the third salesman who did not know that the others had left reduced his bid two more times before it was accepted.

In this case the buyer had not told a deliberate lie. He had simply staged the scene and left it for the fear-thoughts of the salesmen to do the rest. All he had said was: "I believe you will have to do better," and he said that only once. Yet it is safe to say that both of the defeated salesmen returned to their manager and tried to convince him

that it was impossible for them to get business when their prices were so high!

Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the importance of keeping fear away. Blind, unnecessary fear has ruined more promising salesmen than **all** other causes combined, except sheer laziness. **Jock** Hutchinson, the great golf player, once told a man who asked him what he could do to improve his game that the most important thing was to keep your eyes on the ball and forget your rival's score. The golf links are full of players who are really excellent players if only they could keep from getting rattled by the other fellow's score. The same is true in salesmanship.

Respect the Face You See in the Glass

Keep fear away and your success is assured. Don't get discouraged no matter how gloomy the outlook may seem. Being gloomy won't make it any better, and the moment you lose heart you lose your hold on yourself. Always remember that other men are doing the thing that discourages you. School yourself to believe that what others can do you can do. When a customer tells you that a competitor has offered something just as good for 10 per cent less remember that there are other salesmen who are selling goods day in and

day out with competitors' prices fifty and a hundred per cent lower than their prices. The successful salesman goes to the buyer with a definite plan in mind. He knows that the plan is one that the buyer can profitably use. He makes the buyer see the value of the plan just as he sees it and he takes away the order. Every time you call upon a prospect once after having asked him for the order you are weaker in the eyes of two men—the prospect and yourself.

X—Closing a Quality Sale

IN the foregoing chapters we have considered quality mainly as a factor in meeting price competition. We have seen how salesmen in varied lines of business successfully present quality so as to break down the barriers of indifference and high price. But it must be kept in mind that quality talk of itself will not sell anything. It is one thing to convince a man that what you offer is better than what somebody else offers, but quite another thing to make him want your product so badly that his reluctance to part with the money is swallowed up by his desire to possess it. This has already been pointed out.

The same refrigerator salesman mentioned in a previous chapter tells of having talked quality to a hard-boiled New England butcher for a whole afternoon without being able to get his name on the order blank. The salesman had run into the well-known condition of "having the prospect 'sold' but—."

The salesman went back to the hotel and that evening thought things over. He went over the conversation point by point. One thing which it seemed to the salesman had been established that was not driven home was the money-making

effects of quality. He had told the butcher that a Hussman case would save him five cents for every time that he would have to open the door of his present cooler. But the butcher didn't seem to "get it." If he could only make him realize how those nickels mounted up he felt sure that he could get an order. Finally the salesman hit on the following plan:

In the morning he got five nickels for a quarter and went to call on the prospect.

He Kept Tossing Nickels Into the Cooler

Customers were in the store so there wasn't any conversation other than an exchange of greetings. But the first time the butcher went into his cooler to get some meat for one of his customers the salesman threw a nickel right into the cooler door.

The butcher didn't say a word. He looked at the salesman and wondered a bit, but the salesman kept mum.

A few minutes later the butcher went again to the cooler to get meat for the next customer. The salesman threw another nickel into the open door right at the feet of the butcher. Still the salesman offered no explanation for his actions. The butcher became more and more curious. But he didn't say

anything until after the fourth nickel had been thrown, when he stopped and picked up two of the nickels at his feet and tossed them onto his counter. When the last customer had been waited upon the butcher turned to the salesman and said:

"What's the matter with you anyway, are you crazy throwing money around that way?"

The Profit Picture Closed the Deal

And the salesman replied: "I just wanted to see how long it would take me to throw twenty-five cents away, to the tune of five cents every time you opened your cooler door. At the rate you were going I would have gotten rid of my five nickels in thirty minutes—which is at the rate of $4.00 a day. When you deliberately throw $4.00 away every day by sticking to your old fashioned cooler, you should worry about me throwing twenty cents away. I'll get some of my money back anyway (reaching over and pocketing the two nickels which the butcher had picked up and laid on the counter) but the nickels you waste, amounting to hundreds of dollars a year, are gone forever."

The demonstration of lost profits so impressed the butcher that he called in his wife and an

order was handed to the salesman for a Hussman patented freezer display counter. The salesman's plan succeeded because it painted a profit picture with the butcher well up in the foreground. The buyer's desire to save nickels overcame his reluctance to part with the eight hundred dollars which the counter cost.

Good at Entertaining But Poor at Closing

Failure to appreciate this simple truth is one reason why there are so many men selling quality products who are poor closers. You know them —the clever, smooth talking fellows who can talk most interestingly and entertainingly about their products and carry the prospect right up to the point of actually signing the order. But there they stop. The buyer is most enthusiastic about the wonderful line of merchandise the salesman carries, he readily agrees that there is no better made, but somehow he doesn't feel the urge to buy just now. He wants to wait until the market "gets settled," or until business picks up, or until a "little later." The salesman is sure his prospect is "sold" and so states when he reports the call to the office. But unfortunately it takes orders to keep a business running. There is a big difference between a buyer who is "sold" in the sense of

being impressed and one who is sold in the sense of having given you the order.

Don't Take Quality for Granted

There is a temptation for a salesman representing an old-established house to depend too much on the prestige of the house and not enough on his own effort. The same is true of a salesman selling an article whose suporior qualities are undisputed. He leans on the quality too much. He expects it to do his selling for him, which of course it won't. It is not enough that you convince your prospect of the high quality of the thing you are offering, but you must also make him want that quality harder than he wants the money it will cost.

I know that this will sound like "old stuff" to you older salesmen, but it is a strange thing that it is the old timers more than the newer men, who are the most inclined to expect quality to do their closing for them.

Illustrating this point, an executive of the International Harvester Company tells of one of his general agents who took four of that company's best salesmen down to the state fair at Nashville to open a sale of manure spreaders.

These four men worked for three days talking their manure spreader, showing the people how much better their spreader was than anyone else's. Outside he noticed there was located away up on the other side somewhere an older fellow with a manure spreader that was very crudely put up; it was not a nice machine, and he had not any agents with him. He was some old blacksmith that had worked out a spreader; he had no experience in any business and went off up there by himself.

A Blacksmith Outsold the Experts

After the International Harvester man and his four salesmen had been on the job several days without getting a single order he thought he would go up and see what the old man was doing. So he walked up and stood and listened to him. During that time the old man never demonstrated one point about his manure spreader, but he had farmers there all the time, telling them about the advantages of spreading manure evenly on the ground and working it in in fine particles. He said every once in a while the old fellow would take out his order book and a farmer would sign it. He asked the man how many spreaders he had sold, and found he had sold thirty-one, while the four men of the International who had been telling

how much better their machine was than any other, had not taken an order.

Make the Buyer See and Feel Quality

This does not mean that demonstrations do not pay. Neither does it mean that the salesman who confines himself to talking only about a man's needs will outsell the man who talks quality. On the contrary, the blacksmith mentioned above would have been a joke in a competitive situation. He succeeded because he was talking to farmers who probably never compared manure spreaders and may even have supposed his was the only spreader made. In cases where the prospect's decision is influenced largely by matching one product against the others, the salesman who knows his line so thoroughly that he can visualize quality in a spectacular and impressive way will invariably get the business, whereas the man who depends on word pictures will go orderless.

A salesman for the H. D. Lee Company, manufacturers of union-alls, has a plan that is very good for proving quality. He has three swatches of an inferior cloth such as is found in competitive garments, one swatch which has been washed once, another twice and the other three times in an ordinary laundry. He will then have three more

swatches of his own fine quality material which have been subjected to the same number of washes in the same laundry. With these swatches he is able to show dealer that the higher priced material retains its color. He can also measure up for the dealer the smaller shrinkage in the higher priced material and can build up around these proved points his picture of satisfied customers—and all that this means in the way of local prestige, insurance against returned goods, the loss of customers to competitors, etc. There is hardly a thing sold that cannot be demonstrated in some way, if the man who is selling it will only think hard enough."

"Seeing Is Believing"

In any plan for demonstrating quality, however, be sure that the demonstration does not stop at merely proving the article is made of certain high grade materials. A man selling duck awnings can soon convince a buyer by using a magnifying glass that his goods has more threads to the square inch than a competitive awning. This may be conclusive to a buyer who knows that a few extra threads to the square inch will wear longer. But to the average dealer or consumer it sounds plausible but it doesn't prove the case. If the salesman follows up his magnifying glass demon-

stration with another demonstration in which he subjects several samples of his own and cheaper priced ducks to sudden blows and pounding, it would make a much greater impression on the buyers' mind and absolutely convince him that the higher priced goods will outwear the others.

The same principle holds good in selling everything—you will get there much faster by talking about the effects of quality rather than the particular ingredients and materials which compose the quality. No doubt you have heard this a great many times before. It is the dominant idea in many of our large sales organizations, but you would be amazed to stand beside the desk of the average purchasing agent and see how one man after another will come in and talk about the wonderful iron and wood that his stuff is made of. What does a buyer care about what it is made of? What he wants to know is what it will do.

XI—Keeping Old Buyers Sold on Quality

A MERCHANT in a small western city had handled a well-known and widely-advertised line of beverages for many years. He died a few years back and his son succeeded to control of the business.

The son decided that he was paying too much for the well-known goods and took on a cheaper line. The last year he handled the advertised line his sales amounted to $26,000. The year following (during which the store handled the cheaper line) local business conditions were better, yet in spite of that the business done by the store dropped to $13,000—just one-half.

The son afterwards admitted to the salesman for the high priced line that the loss of business was due to the fact that his trade, having been educated to quality merchandise would not take the cheaper beverage, although he was able to offer far better price inducements.

The facts in this incident are vouched for by one of the largest and most reputable firms in its line but whose policy prevents our using their name. It is an experience which has been paralleled by hundreds of other dealers. Indeed, we

venture that there is hardly a man of extensive business experience who has not learned to his sorrow that once people have "tasted" quality they will never be satisfied with something "just as good."

Easier to "Trade-up" Than "Trade-down"

There is a rule in merchandising that it is easier to "trade-up" than it is to "trade-down"—meaning that a seller can keep offering merchandise of constantly increasing quality and by so doing build up his business, but when he attempts to cut the quality of what he sells he immediately loses the patronage of those whom he has educated to want only the best. If the only car you have driven is a Ford you will be well satisfied with a Ford. But once you have driven a Marmon or a Cadillac you will never again feel the same toward your Ford, and it is quite probable that you will become so dissatisfied that you will trade it in at the first opportunity for a car of better quality.

Every buyer understands this just as well as you do, but some of them lack the determination of purpose to withstand the persuasiveness of your competitor's salesmen. This is especially true if you assume that because you have once sold a

buyer a quality line there is no need of your ever mentioning quality to him again. This is a failing common to us all. We are ever ready to spend weary hours and unlimited money to win new customers, but once we win the customer we rest on our oars. There is no such thing as a customer who is sold so thoroughly that he can be neglected — particularly when it comes to being sold on paying a higher price.

When Customers Are Left to Sell Themselves

A well known soap manufacturing concern was taken over by the banks a few years ago because excessive selling costs had eaten up all the surplus. The business was facing disaster. A committee of bankers made an analysis of the business. They located the trouble in the high rate of dealer mortality. In one year five hundred new accounts had been opened, which was on its face a good record, but the gain was more than offset by a loss of six hundred old accounts.

The new management concentrated its sales effort on keeping the old customers sold, and made little effort to win new accounts the first two years. As might be expected, sales costs began to drop at once. It costs less to increase the sales to customers already on the books than it does to go

out and get new ones. Inside of six months the volume of orders turned in by the sales force had increased nearly one-third, and before the year was out had practically doubled. Yet the selling expense was but little more.

Nothing Succeeds Like Re-orders

During the second year a peculiar thing happened. The policy of concentrating sales effort on present customers had the effect of turning what had previously been dealer indifference to the product into pronounced enthusiasm. The dealers saw their sales of the product increase steadily as a result of the co-operation they were getting from the company's salesmen. Gradually the idea became fixed in their minds that the line was a fast seller and a money-maker. Naturally they talked about it to other dealers and other salesmen. One dealer told another. One salesman told another.

Before long it became pretty well newsed about that this particular line of soap was one of the best a dealer could handle. The company, instead of having to spend all its profit talking skeptical dealers into "trying a few bars to see how it will take with your trade," found itself in the enviable

position of having the dealers come to it and ask on what terms they could handle the line!

There is nothing that succeeds so well as success, and there is no better way of making success succeed than through the untiring, intelligent upbuilding of present customers. This holds true in selling anything.

Use Old Customers to Get New Ones

The salesman who sells a so-called "one time" specialty such as an adding machine, an automobile or life insurance should least of all neglect the customer he has put on the company's books. The old customer who has been thoroughly sold on quality to begin with, and kept sold on it after buying, is a salesman's best source of leads. The saying that a satisfied customer is a concern's best advertisement is very true. An old customer is constantly coming in contact with persons who contemplate buying. These persons naturally ask his advice. His answer will make or break the sale according to how thoroughly the salesman has done his work. Then too, few concerns stand still in business. They are continually in the market for improved models, new equipment or equipment for other business enterprises in which they are interested.

In selling products for resale you will occassionally encounter the peculiar condition that the dealer is secretly prejudiced against quality products because they last too long! The makers of Cheney's cravats have this to contend with. Competitors prey on the money hungry haberdashers by whispering in their ears that they are driving away business by handling Cheney's stuff — it lasts too long.

"Your Stuff Lasts Too Long"

If the dealer is inclined to buy on impulse without thinking very deeply he will make the tragic mistake of either substituting a short lived article, or else hiding the Cheney line so that only those who demand Cheney quality will get it. Moreover to make the situation worse it is unlikely that the dealer will say anything to the Cheney salesman for fear of putting himself in the position of considering profits regardless of good will, which the dealer knows very well is fundamentally wrong. The same condition exists in the paint field, to a less pronounced extent, and in every other field where quality means longer life, or makes the product go farther.

Do not wait for your trade to bring up this objection to quality before planting a charge of

dynamite under it. Regardless of what your customers admit you may rest assured that hardly a day goes by but what some smooth-talking salesman who is in the "game" to make a killing is poisoning your customer with this idle talk. Make it a point to keep an ear open for concrete instances, such as we cited at the opening of this chapter, which conclusively prove the long distance business building features of your line.

Impress upon your customer that he is in business to stay and that a reputation for handling quality goods is the best possible business insurance.

Remind him that a quality business is slower to get under way but once under way nothing can stop it—"the first hundred customers come hard, the second hundred come easier and the remaining hundreds are attracted by the crowd."

Give Your Customer the Big View

Last but not least, repeatedly emphasize that goods with known reputation for quality are half sold, (we know, of course, that they sell themselves but it is not wise to shut the merchant out of the picture entirely.) The extra cost involved in selling unknown goods of questionable quality will usually more than offset any loss, real or

imaginary, resulting from longer life or greater reaching qualities. If the dealer uses a uniform mark-up the consequent extra profit on the higher priced goods is "velvet."

It sometimes happens, however, that certain conditions necessitate a maker setting a lower resale price on an article than the cost of production should call for. Competitive conditions might make it wise to put out a superior article at the competitor's retail price.

Profits Are Often Deceiving

Then again the maker might figure that the lower resale price will stimulate sales, and eventually give him greater volume. On most products profits hinge on volume so that such a course would be good business. But to do this the maker must not only be satisfied with a smaller profit himself, but he rightfully expects his dealers (who stand to profit by the policy just as much as he will) to be satisfied with a smaller mark-up. Unfortunately the small business man lacks the vision of the big business man and instead of viewing the matter in its large aspects he sometimes takes the small view.

To keep your customers sold under these conditions requires educating them to the difference

between a large profit and a slow turn-over and a small profit with a fast turn-over.

This is easier said than done, for strange as it may seem very few small business men really understand the principle of turn-over. They all say they do. Most of them think they do. A few can even tell you just what it means, but the fact remains that they are all in need of constant reselling on this point. Why? Because it is human nature to think that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. A twenty cent mark-up looks bigger than a ten cent mark-up. Which, of course, is not always so when the balance sheet is added up at the end of the year.

Tony Turns Over a Ten-spot

To help Goodrich salesmen get over the turn-over idea to their trade, the B. F. Goodrich Rubber Company suggested the following illustration. It can be fitted to what you sell just as well as Goodrich has made it fit the tire business.

"Every morning Tony, the banana man, buys a cart load of bananas costing $10.00, and before night he sells them for $20.00.

"Working every day, including Sundays, he turns his stock 30 times a month. He does a gross

business of $7,200.00 a year, and a half of it is profit.

"After a few years Tony can frame his original ten spot and live off the income of his apartment houses.

"Of course, the answer to Tony's success is turnover. And the answer to any tire dealer's success is the same. You can push the sale of tires that are unknown and turn your stock once or twice a year. Or you can push Goodrich and 'clean house' every couple months. Thinkover—Turnover."

When You Feel Yourself Slipping

Before leaving the subject of how to sell Quality there is one more point that might be made, and that is the quality of your salesmanship. When you get a turn-down here and a turn-down there until your pace begins to slow up; when you begin to expect buyers to shoot objections and you doubt your own ability to handle those objections properly—what's wrong? Simply this: you are losing your quality—it needs warming up.

One way to wipe out the blue atmosphere is to remember that your company is going right ahead doing business year after year. It has built up a

large business and it is going to keep on building —nothing can stop it. Just remember this when you are talking with pessimistic buyers. A little thing like their pessimism is not going to stop a big success like that of the company you are working for, so how can it stop you? You are going to be carried right along with the business as long as you keep *working* and *working*.

When you feel yourself slipping, go back and read some of your literature; study your proposition; sell yourself again. Then call upon your buyers and show them the pride and confidence you have in your company.

A Man Is No Bigger Than He Thinks He Is

Your success in selling quality depends on yourself. If you want to achieve big things think big. Think big orders. Visualize them. Then go and get them. When the buyer brings up petty excuses and trivial objections sweep him off his feet by showing him the bigger aspect of the problem. Dare to presume that the customer is a big buyer and a big visioned business man, even though he may not look the part. It is a curious fact that very frequently people who have the price to pay for quality do not look like quality articles themselves.

SUPPLEMENT

How to Illustrate the Economy of Quality

"When a person buys a cheap article, he feels good when he pays for it, and disgusted every time he uses it. When he buys a good article, he feels better every time he uses it, for the recollection of quality remains long after the the price is forgotten."

E. C. Simmons

How to Illustrate the Economy of Quality

THE following plans have been submitted by salesmen in different lines of business. In each case they have proved useful to some salesman in his line of business. We cannot hope that all of these illustrations will fit into your sales tactics, or prove useful to you in driving home quality. But we will set them down, without any embellishments, just as they have been handed to us, hoping that among them you may find one or two ideas that will help you to become a better quality salesman.

When a Farmer Quotes the Big Catalog

BUYER: "That's too much money. I saw one just like it in Rear's Socbuck's big catalogue for $45. Guess I'll buy from them and save some money."

SELLER: "Do you know, Si, you remind me for all the world of the fellow who fed his horse saw dust to save the cost of oats. The horse was getting along fine when he died."

If the Buyer Should be an Employer of Salesmen

SELLER: "In selling your merchandise, Mr. Jones, I assume that you employ salesmen?"

BUYER: "Yes, we have five."

SELLER: "And of those five, I suppose there is one who sells more than any other man."

BUYER: "Yes, I have one man who sells three times as much as all the others put together."

SELLER: "But you pay him a good deal more salary than you do the others, don't you?"

BUYER: "Why certainly."

SELLER: "And in spite of the fact that you pay him a much bigger salary, I will venture to say that he is the lowest priced salesman you have on your sales force, and that the men you pay the smallest salaries to are the highest priced salesmen on your force?"

BUYER: "That is about the size of it."

SELLER: "It is the same in everything, don't you think, Mr. Jones? The best is always the cheapest, and the cheapest is usually the most expensive. It is particularly true when it comes to buying an—etc."

Are You Selling Service?

BUYER: "We know of another concern whose fees are considerably lower than yours."

SELLER: "I don't know who you have in mind, but I will say quite frankly that there are any number of men in town whose fees are anywhere from one-half to two-thirds of ours. The same is true of lawyers, doctors or any professional men who offer specialized knowledge. If your wife had a goiter you would want the very best surgeon you could find to operate on her, I am sure. In all probability you would send her to Mayo brothers. You could find any number of doctors right here in town who would claim that they could do all that the Mayos would do for much less than you would have to pay the Mayos, who as you know charge on the basis of your ability to pay. But you know, and I know, that in the long run you would save money, and more important still save your wife untold suffering, by getting the very best skill money can hire. When you are buying brains, Mr. Prospect, the best is always the cheapest, etc.

For the Buyer Who Drives a Car

BUYER: "But I can get them for less."

SELLER: "Surely you can. So can you get fabric tires for less than you pay for those cord tires you use on your Marmon. But you cheerfully pay half

again as much for the cords because you know that you will get twice the mileage with only half the tire trouble. What is a hundred dollars if you can save two hundred? Now, there is just as much difference between the ——, that you say you can buy for less, and what I am offering you, as there is between cord tires and fabric tires. You know very well that you can't get a cord tire for the price of a fabric and you wouldn't expect to, and you should not expect to get our —— for the price of ——'s."

When the Product is Backed By a House of Quality

SELLER: "As I understand it Mr. Brown, you are opposed to my product on the grounds that you can get just as good for less money?"

BUYER: "That's it."

SELLER: (Reaching into his inside pocket and taking out two baby bonds—one a United States government bond and the other a bond on a local theatrical enterprise): "Now I am going to hand you two pieces of paper, Mr. Brown. They are both one hundred dollar bonds. They are both beautiful things of gilt and bronze. So far as looks go, one is exactly as good as another. If you are going to invest one hundred dollars in bonds, and had only these two to choose from, which of the two would you buy?"

BUYER: "Why, the government bond, of course."

SELLER: "And may I ask why you would buy the government bond for which you will have to pay $98, as compared with the other bond which you can buy at $95?"

BUYER: "Because I know something about the government and I don't know anything about the building bond. My money would be safer, and I would willingly sacrifice the difference in first cost to get a safer investment."

SELLER: "In other words, Mr. Brown, you would buy the more expensive bond because of what is back of it. That is what any wise business man would do, and I contend that the same principle holds true in buying. So far as the product goes it looks the same, it feels the same—I'll even admit it is the same (which it isn't), just as both of these pieces of paper are 'bonds.' Now then—let's see who is behind the product," etc.

If the Buyer's Hobby is Base Ball

BUYER: "I'll admit that there is a good deal to what you say, and probably your —— is better than those Blank is selling. But all the same, Blank's line is a whole lot cheaper."

SELLER: "Cheaper! Of course it is cheaper. When you want to see a good ball game you pay $2.00 to see the —— (naming his pet team) play. If you are only out to save money why don't you go to the cheapest game you can find?"

BUYER: "Because it's worth the extra to see a real game."

SELLER: "Sure it is. And it's worth the extra to get our ——. Here's why, etc."

Going the Prospect One Better

A check protector salesman says:

"Yes, you can buy a machine for less money—all the way from $5 up. In fact you can buy a paper crimper for twenty-five cents, if you want something that is merely connected with check protection. But if you want *real* protection, and a machine that will stand up like a *real* machine, etc."

An advertising space salesman says:

"I am sorry, Mr. Advertiser, if I gave you the impression that our publication would prove a 'cheap' medium from the standpoint of getting inquiries. When you use space in Printers' Ink you are buying more than inquiries. You are buying the prestige that goes with thirty years of advertising leadership. You are buying a short-cut to recognition as a national headquarters for your line. If you are interested only in inquiries, you can get them by the hundreds for as low as five cents each by merely sending out some government reply cards asking your prospects to write you for prices. But your advertising should do more than merely bring in inquiries."

If You Sell Protection of Any Kind

BUYER: "Your price is way too high. I can buy it for much less."

SELLER: "That is very true, Mr. Wilson, you can buy it for less money. I don't blame you at all for saying that because if I were in your position I

might feel precisely as you do. But after all, it's not the first cost that we should consider in making our decision. The important thing is what it will do for you. You can buy a latch for your door for twenty-five cents that will lock the door, but will it keep a burglar out or afford you the same protection that you will get from a Yale lock?"

For the Man Who is Proud of His Watch

BUYER: "That's all very well, but still I can't see the idea of paying you ten cents a dozen more than I am now paying."

SELLER: "For the same reason, Mr. Brown, that the railroads of this country are not run by dollar watches. You can buy a watch for a dollar or a hundred dollars. This is not casting any reflections on the watch that made the dollar famous, because a dollar watch may keep good time for a year—in fact it is guaranteed to do that. But you know that the next watch you buy is going to be a watch that will keep good time for the rest of your life. Isn't that so?"